

Competency #1: Ethical and Professional Behavior

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**1. In what ways have I accomplished this competency/practice behaviors?**

Because I incorporated the NASW Code of Ethics into my judgment calls and regular encounters with clients at my practicum site, I performed ethically and professionally. Because of the talents I've developed during my academic career, I improved my communication skills and critical thinking abilities because of my learning how to assess a client's situation and my greater understanding of the ideas underlying the profession of social work. I also had to improve my active listening skills to let clients finish talking before I spoke up. As a social worker, I understood that to ask clients the right questions; I would need to pay close attention to what they had to say. I also need to use summaries and paraphrases to back up my statements. I learned these skills in my SWK 101- Introduction to Social Work and SWK 416/ 456 Generalist Practice.

**2. How has my thinking changed over time?**

I've changed the way I think as a result of my internship. I learned the competencies, but putting them into practice is a different experience. I will abide by the Code of Ethics because it is the social workers' sacred book. Thanks to the competencies, I could better comprehend the difficulties the clients were facing. I work in the area of developmental and intellectual disabilities (IDDs). This group deals with a vast spectrum of disabilities. Resources to help them may occasionally be lacking if they do not have that individual to speak for them. Knowing this, I had to find a way to help them when they could not articulate their thoughts or feelings. I tried to think of ways to have them noticed, to make them as autonomous as I could. Before SWK 324, I thought about the Foundation of Social Justice rather than how to assist the less fortunate, especially marginalized groups. My opinions about these people changed due to how they were treated, which was insignificant.

**What are the practice behaviors that indicate my competency in this area?**

Here are some behaviors I engage in that, from an ethical and professional standpoint, show my proficiency. I act professionally in my appearance, speech, and manner of conduct to show my commitment. I behaved adequately and was attentive, orderly, and tidy. I placed a high value on punctuality since it demonstrated my reliability, dedication to my internship, and ability to communicate well with employees and clients. I discovered in Social Work 101 that vocal communication should also be orderly, concise, and sequential and I apply those behaviors respectively.

**4. What curriculum content areas (social policy, practice etc.) relate to successfully completing this competency?**

I concluded from this curriculum that, to function ethically and professionally, I needed to have a firm grasp of the history of social work. To participate in the experience and make it a reality, I needed to understand how social welfare services and the current framework are related. My social work studies taught me how to apply what I had learned, which changed how I think and behave. I can assess how far I've come since applying what I've learned by recognizing the importance of social policies and how to put them into practice.

**5. What learning experiences helped me to accomplish this competency?**

To develop this competency, when a professor explained something and I didn't fully understand it, I would ask them a question to help me improve this skill. I also get better at this skill by following my learning plan and meeting with my field supervisor one-on-one once a week. When I would answer questions from my supervisor about what had happened in the field, she would reply, "But Andi, you cannot put your beliefs on your clients," which I understood meant that I shouldn't have my values imposed on my clients. I'm not there to tell them what they

should do; instead, in my capacity as a guide, I'm there to help them express themselves based on the relevant resources. To demonstrate my expertise by ethical standards as part of competency one, I had to set my background aside and concentrate on why I was in the profession. My professional and personal experiences have taught me a lot about upholding values professionally and personally. I can recall, for instance, one of my employees criticizing God. My thoughts then shift to the idea that everyone is entitled to an opinion and that judgment should not be exercised. There was nothing wrong with that person verbally expressing their emotions. During our first semester of social work school, we learned about how diversity affects and shapes the field and our professional identities. Recognizing that not everyone would serve God and that some might even doubt whether He is a true god gave me a broader perspective.

**6. What “gaps” can I identify in my learning experience? What will I do about these “gaps”?**

Setting goals and objectives are essential to my ethical leadership as a social worker. My convictions must have boundaries and be solely centered on the client's needs. Some gaps for me are being biased and dealing with the LBGTQ community without judging them, which are two of my major weaknesses. I'll continue to educate myself on that demographic in response to these gaps.

**7. Professional Growth Plan: identify goals for continued personal and professional growth**

Because there are no limitations on what I can accomplish or who I can help, I'm interested in becoming a clinical social worker. Since one of my goals has always been to help people in need, I want to reach a few goals that will give me the knowledge, resources, and skills I need to advance in my career. Instead of the one-on-one care that social service agencies often offer, I aim to provide individual therapy to benefit adult clients with specific needs.

Furthermore, working as a counselor will allow me to do what I enjoy most: converse with and get to know the people whose lives I am assisting in making important decisions. This will help me move up in my field and reach my long-term goal of becoming a certified clinical social worker.

### **8. What values and ethical dilemmas have challenged you in your fieldwork?**

Working with people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs) has been hard for me in several ways. During one of our meetings, one of my clients talked a lot about how much he liked chocolate. Until he clarified, I thought his remark was about candy. His love for chocolate was his expression of his passion for black women. After realizing what he meant, I felt uneasy around him due to my own prejudices, which led to a bad attitude that stopped him from getting the help he needed because I was uncomfortable around him.

### **9. How did you or might you resolve them?**

I reminded him that his actions were improper. Every time we spoke, he acted the same way. Our meetings took place in his home, where I typically go alone. I resolved the issue by beginning to bring staff with me after I realized he would remain the same out of concern for my safety. Although I maintained my professional approach, I secretly thought, "Oh God, not this guy again," each time I had to meet with him. I discussed the matter with my boss several times, but since I oversee the program, there is no way I can avoid seeing this client. She suggests I keep bringing a staff member with me on every home visit.

### **10. How did you use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values?**

I started by working on myself. I needed to get rid of the visible attitude on my face. My ability to control my thoughts helped me do this and remind myself of my ideals and the necessity of acting ethically. The client was expressing himself and was unaware that what he

was saying was inappropriate due to his IDD. However, it is crucial that he completely comprehend why his acts are wrong, so it was essential for me to behave professionally while explaining to him why he could not say such things to me. I tried to hold back my annoyance at the client's behavior, but I couldn't help it. Every time I went to his house, I had to be sure that what I did was in line with my long-term goals and principles. I visit him once a week as part of my employment to let him know I am there to provide professional support by ensuring he has enough food, medicine, and other essentials. Working with this client was difficult, but I could control my emotions, be positive, and not take things personally.

**11. Provide examples of how you demonstrated professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication.**

Although I knew my client's conduct was unlikely to alter, I maintained a positive outlook. Every time he started his shenanigans, I would shift the conversation to something else to keep my focus on why I was there. I kept a good and productive tone by being optimistic and speaking respectfully. I still encourage and motivate the client throughout the process.

**12. Reflect on the use of technology in your field agency. How is it used?**

Since IDD encompasses many limitations, numerous technologies are available at my organization to help those with the condition. For instance, a typical keyboard or mouse may be inaccessible to those unable to use their hands or arms. With minor hardware changes, people with disabilities who cannot use ordinary keyboards and mice can completely replace them. Those with problems regulating their fine motor abilities utilize huge, widely spaced keys instead of standard ones. Additionally, the company uses educational software, which delivers multi-sensory experiences. These technologies assist with positive reinforcement, tailored teaching, and repetition that benefit skill development.

**13. Provide examples of how you used supervision to guide your professional behavior and judgment.**

I directed my behaviors and decisions in a way that was acceptable for my position during my weekly supervision session, focusing on my ideas, feelings, and experiences. I used my skills, like active listening, to provide the assistance and information needed to facilitate decision-making. When my client realized I wasn't amusing him, I focused on the purposes of our weekly meetings despite his disrespectful behavior. I went above and beyond the client's actions and behaviors to provide compassionate, nonjudgmental support. I developed a trusting relationship with my client, and we collaborated to communicate ideas, emotions, and feelings to ensure he received the required care. I now have a greater grasp of the duties I must carry out throughout my field experience, as well as how to always conduct myself professionally and ethically.